

### Abstract of the Disclosure

A database management system that has bitmap values in which set bits in a representation of a  
5 bitstring specify a set of objects whose definitions are built into the database management  
system. The database management system further includes user-accessible operations on the  
bitmap values. The bitmap values are represented by means of a mapping specifier that specifies  
a range of the set of objects and a representation of a string of bits that has been mapped onto the  
set of object specified by the range specifier. The representation of the string of bits may be  
10 compressed. Bitmap operations on the values may alter the range specifier, the size of the string  
of bits, or individual bits in the string of bits. The objects represented by the bitmap values may  
be objects in the database management system or objects external thereto. An example of  
bitmap values of the first kind are bitmap values representing sets of rowids. rowid bitmap  
values may be used to make a user-defined index of attribute values for any set of objects  
15 contained in fields in the database management system. An example of bitmap values of the  
second kind are bitmap values representing sets of electronic product codes. ePC bitmap values  
may be used in any application where a compact representation of a set of ePC codes is desired.

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